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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 001924

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL PGOV I
SUBJECT: PRT DIYALA: UNCERTAINTY ABOUT PRT MOVEMENTS POST JUNE 30

Classified By: PRT Diyala Leader George White for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

This is a PRT Diyala reporting cable.

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Conflicting U.S. and Iraqi interpretations of the implications of the U.S. military's June 30th withdrawal from Iraqi cities are disrupting PRT and Coalition Forces (CF) operations in Diyala. The handover of local military bases has also been complicated by this uncertainty, and has been exacerbated by increased Government of Iraq (GOI) involvement in the province. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) CF were required to withdraw from urban areas in all parts of Iraq on June 30. Yet confusion over how this should happen, and how CF and the PRT will operate after June 30, has hampered USG activities in Diyala province. Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in Diyala apparently have a much stricter interpretation of the USG-GOI Security Agreement, and of the understanding of how freely U.S. vehicles can move in the province now. The PRT has received a copy of Diyala Provincial Director of Police (PDOP) order 5446, dated July 3, 2009, (in Arabic) to all Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) units which states, in part: "Patrols and duties in cities, urban centers, and towns in all of your AO (area of operations) by all of the American Forces, in all forms, are prohibited."

¶3. (C) CF report numerous incidents with local Iraqi Police (IP) questioning the right of movement of U.S. military and civilian personnel in Diyala, and even the continued U.S. presence in rural areas. On July 1 and 2, the IP questioned why CF were outside of FOB Warhorse; in several cases CF were denied access to local Diyala GOI and Provincial Government contacts. On July 3, IP rebuffed CF responding to a report of gunfire in the area around Abu Sayda and asked them to leave the town. As CF exited the area they came under attack, including fire from a rocket propelled grenade.

¶4. (C) The GOI has called into question the unrestricted movement of PRT Diyala personnel and our required CF escort. Normal PRT operations, including planned visits to Diyala Provincial Government officials, have been disrupted and are now in flux. On July 7, the PRT Deputy Team Leader was delayed by several hours for a scheduled meeting with the Provincial Governor while his convoy waited for the (required) IP escort to arrive. The PRT's Governance and Public Affairs teams' movement to a meeting at the Diyala Provincial Council building was cancelled when IP escorts failed to appear.

¶5. (C) Plans to transition CF bases and other facilities to Iraqi control in Diyala were disrupted by an official from the Office of the Prime Minister identified as Security Advisor Samir Al Haddad. Al Haddad arrived unannounced at CF COP (Combat Outpost) Gabe in Ba'aquba, Diyala, and demanded that CF vacate the base immediately. (NOTE: This demand came before/before June 30. END NOTE). He demanded that U.S. personnel depart right away and that equipment (specifically infrastructure items such as generators) be

left behind.

¶ 16. (C) Al Haddad made similar demands at the transition of previously USG-occupied office space at the Diyala Government Center. He also stated that documents related to transitioning bases should be made out to a GOI "Receivership Secretariat" rather than to the Ministry of the Interior.

¶ 17. (C) COMMENT: The uncertainty over ISF's movement requirements reduces the PRT's effectiveness. The abrupt departure of CF training teams from Diyala bases as ordered by Al-Haddad has left ISF ill-prepared to maintain security in the province. This approach has also led to a noticeable decline in the ISF's willingness to cooperate with CF training units with which the ISF has previously partnered.

END COMMENT.

HILL